

Information Skills in the Elementary School Classroom: A Teacher's Guide

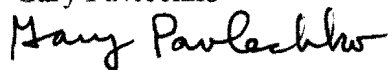
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Information Skills in the Elementary School Classroom: A Teacher's Guide

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Pavlechko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'G' and 'P'.

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I would also like to thank Diane Swing, my supervising teacher at Forest Dale Elementary School in Carmel, Indiana for giving me the freedom, and trusting me to complete this project. Without this opportunity, I would not have the first hand insight to complete my thesis.

Why use Information Skills Models?:

As educators, it is our job to arm our students with the skills necessary to succeed in the future. No matter what grade level we teach, our students will eventually be released into the “real world,” and they will need every advantage to compete in the new digital world. Everyday new technologies and jobs are created to meet the needs of our new global world. Learning is no longer confined to the classroom, and more often than not, it will not be conducted by teachers but by individuals. The only way to acquire this new information will be through information skills that require students to identify their task, select the best sources, and use the information to create a new product. Much like we are required to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, it is our responsibility to teach our students information skills.

When *A Nation at Risk* was published in 1983, it saw a need for the “skill of managing information in digital form”. Twenty years later, we have yet to fill this need, even though we are surrounded by information presented in digital form. In today’s world, information does not just present itself purely through textbooks and lecture, nor should it. Students have access to print, visual, audio, and computer-based media. At the same time, what information gets out there is no longer restricted the way it used to be;

anyone can be published. Teachers cannot just set their students loose to do research. Students need to be taught how to identify good, accurate information.

In an effort to formally present the issue of information skills, the US Department of Education, the American Library Association, and the American Association of School Librarians, have all set up a framework to teach and evaluate information skills (Koch, 2001).

Unfortunately, only Maryland and Wisconsin have standards that integrate information literacy across the curriculum, and most studies indicate that schools in these states are lagging behind on information literacy or are not even trying (Koch, 2001). These results seem to suggest that teachers and administrators feel that information skills are a passing education fad that will eventually pass, and they do not have time to divert from their “real” subjects that are addressed on standardized tests. Educators need to see that the digital world is only going to continue to pry its way into every aspect of our life (Armstrong and Warlick, 2004). Students today are bombarded with information, and need to learn how to filter and process it (Tozer, 2001). Students who are information illiterate will be at the same disadvantages as a person who is unable to read or write.

Other teachers may see the importance of information skills, but because they do not fit into their school districts’ standards they cannot take time to teach information skills. Ultimately, information skills are about critical thinking, which is addressed in state standards in all fifty states. Information skills also require students to use their higher order thinking skills. Students must evaluate information when comparing and discriminating between ideas. Students must also combine ideas across the curriculum to form new opinions and ideas. Analysis must take place with new information to look for

bias and hidden messages found inside today's media outlets. Finally, synthesis is required when students create new ideas out of previous knowledge. (Pappas and Tepe, 2002).

The last group of teachers who do not see a need for information skills in the classroom are those teachers who do not demonstrate information skills literacy. Many teachers use their classroom computer mainly to publish documents and to send and receive email messages. Many of these teachers are the perfect example of why information skills are needed in our schools. They have plenty of technology at their fingertips, but they are completely overwhelmed by it, and do not know how to use the majority of technologies. Even when the technology is used, it is not used to its full potential. Often times teachers are so excited to use technology in their classroom that they do not evaluate it to see if they are presented information to the class in the most appropriate format.

Looking at Information Skills Models:

Information skills will often direct educators and students to a commercial model with which they feel most comfortable. Like any other curriculum program, in the first year or two, it is the goal to have a program completed from start to finish. As educators become more comfortable with the idea of information skills and how the program works, they explore the model and use the positive aspects of the model, while tinkering with the weaker aspects of the model.

One of the more popular models used in schools, especially by library media specialists, is the *Big6* model. The *Big6* is made up of six stages; Task Definition, Information Seeking Strategies, Location and Access, Use of Information, Synthesis, and

Evaluate. Looking at the titles alone it is easy to see that this model utilizes higher order thinking skills. The first three steps of this model are especially helpful because it requires students to critically look at the problem they are presented with and determine what sources are best to solve their information problem. However, once they get started with their research, students are not encouraged to evaluate their resources. Another weakness of this program is that it is modeled off of the traditional research model: state the problem, research, assemble the research, and present it. Students are not encouraged to actively evaluate and explore throughout the entire process. Creators of the model say that it is not necessary to complete the model in a linear fashion, but they do encourage linear progression with the structure of the model.

Another model that is growing in popularity is the *PLUS* model. Students are given tools to Plan their work, Locate the best information, Use the information effectively, and Self-evaluate their work. Working as a linear model, students are given specific direction on what to do in a systematic fashion. For students and teachers just beginning to look at information skills I feel that this is one of the better models out there. Students can complete one of the four steps of the model and continue without having to go back. This provides the structure that many students need when introduced to information skills, as well as the linear model with which they are most accustomed. This aspect is also the weakness of the model. Once students are introduced to and gain experience with the model they will be ready for non-linear models that give them more freedom and require more critical thinking. This model also does not focus on technology, which is the cornerstone of information skills. Students are not encouraged to look beyond the traditional limitations of the library. Teachers may also find that this

model is great for research papers, but it is limited in its ability to guide students towards a more in-depth or creative project (Herring, 1996).

One model that has tried to address the issue of linear progress is Follett's information skills model, *Pathways to Knowledge*. The six key stages of the *Pathways to Knowledge* program include; Appreciation, Presearch, Search, Interpretation, Communication, and Evaluation. This model focuses on inquiry-based learning and encourages students to move around the model when appropriate. The program is also very good at presenting educators with the theory of the program and gives suggestions on how to implement it. This gives educators and students the flexibility and creative space to personalize the model to a specific project or learning style. With this freedom comes one of the largest downfalls of the model. While working through the model or moving around the model, if a student does not fully implement one of the steps the entire model can fall apart. One reason for this is that all six stages require reflection, but the reflection in this model is quite factual. Students are not required to show that they are using higher order thinking skills to reflect and evaluate their choices. Another problem with the *Pathways* program is that it directs educators to put too much emphasis on technology. In every stage of their model, they suggest software programs that will help students work through that particular stage. In the next ten years, these ideas may be commonplace, but in today's schools, it is impossible. Time, money, and technology education, prevent students and educators from incorporating all of these programs into the curriculum. Trying to incorporate all of this technology can also distract from the information skills themselves.

When creating my own model I looked at the above three and tried to use their strengths, while trying to avoid their weaknesses. My *Interactive Model*, ties together information skills and inquiry learning to allow students to take charge of their learning problem. My model can also be used with any subject, and it encourage a cross-disciplinary curriculum. The *Interactive Model* has eight steps that let students work in a non-linear progress; Appreciation, Directing, Planning, Exploration, Acknowledgement, Tie Together, Share, and Backtrack.

The goal of **Appreciation** is to spark the students' curiosity and get them to focus on a topic they wish to know more about. This could stem from anything; an enrichment activity, school convocation, the beginning, middle, or end of a unit, outside interest, classroom discussion, etc. At this stage, students are given complete freedom to explore. Because the *Interactive Model* is non-linear, this stage could take place with a student still having unanswered questions or new questions at the end of one project, and then turn around and start a new project.

When **Directing**, students formally establish their objective(s) and question(s). Students need to transfer their thoughts, ideas, and experiences into a driving question. A driving question is one that identifies exactly what the students would like to know, and allows them to narrow in their topic. When working with students who are newly introduced to information skills it may be appropriate to step in and help them narrow their questions to one driving question. This step is extremely important because students will need to ask a good question to direct them to their final product. It is not necessary for a student to be able to answer their driving question in this section. Students are simply finding a direction they would like to take their project.

During the **Planning** stage, students will plan a course of action. Working as a class, group, or as individuals, students will determine what they already know and brainstorm additional ideas. During this stage, students will also need to brainstorm and identify appropriate sources. Encourage students to consider primary as well as secondary sources in their research. Students should also consider sources that are not readily available to them. It may be helpful with beginning students to brainstorm all of the resources available to them. This would be a great opportunity to introduce students to interlibrary loan, untapped resources in the community, as well as directing them to different educators in the district who may be more knowledgeable on their topic.

In the **Exploration** stage, students are able to demonstrate their information skills and explore through inquiry learning. Students should use multiple types of sources (i.e. textbooks, Internet, audio/visual, interactive media, community, teacher, hands on activities, etc.) The teacher is mostly passive in this stage, offering guidance and redirection where needed. For younger students this stage will most likely be the most difficult. Working with a media specialist, it may be helpful to pull books, create a Web Portal, or set up a class speaker to help students narrow down the information with which they are presented. During this stage, it is also important for students to identify a method to organize their information. For some students this may be a 3x5 note card, while other students may chose to use a chart. Students should be allowed to use a method with which they are most comfortable.

While in the **Exploring** stage, students will also be working in the **Acknowledgment** stage. Here students will use their project journals to keep a daily log of the sources they are using. Students must include a Works Cited for all sources

explored, as well as an evaluation of each source. Students must ask themselves if the source they are using is beneficial and reliable. Does the information apply to their driving question? How will they use the information to create their final product? Did the information in one source contradict the information in a different source? If so, how will they go about determining which source is accurate. Is bias evident in the source? If there is bias, how was the bias identified, and what does the bias indicate about the information. Students should be continuously coming back to this stage to evaluate and document their resources.

Throughout the project, students need to **Tie Together** their information to fully answer their questions and create their product. This is a time for students to create the scaffolding necessary to take their building blocks of information and create a new product. This step should be revisited often. Students should be continuously tying together their new information to make sure it connects and helps answer their driving question. Many students beginning with information skills may find themselves diverted off topic. Guiding them back to this stage is a great way to get them to stop, look at their new information, and try to piece it together.

As students are gathering information, and especially when they have gathered all of their information, they will need to **Share**. In this stage, students must determine the best way to present their information and teach it to others. When students have to teach what they have learned they will reinforce the information they have just learned themselves. This step can change dramatically depending on the project. Demonstration for students showing the effects of different presentation types on different topics is sound pedagogical practice. Some topics can be presented in the form of a paper, while

other topics come across better to an audience if they are acted out or diagramed. During this stage, students also have the opportunity to discuss and share new ideas. Students often times do not realize the wealth of knowledge and experiences their classmates have to share. This is also a time for students with different learning styles to add and suggest ideas to create a more well-rounded product.

The final stage in the *Interactive Model* is to **Backtrack**. Throughout the project students should stop and evaluate the steps and decisions they have made up to that point. Students should ask themselves: did I follow through with my objective? Have I answered my driving question? Am I using appropriate sources? What would I do differently if I were to do this project again? How well did I communicate information with others? After presenting their project, students should complete a final evaluate of how well they worked through the model as well as an evaluation their final product.

Unlike the other models, a journal or log is used that acts as a thread connecting each step together. Students are encouraged to evaluate and plan at each step, which should be evident from their journals. The journal also gives teachers a written artifact that can be assessed, and serves as an open dialogue between teachers and students. Like the other three models, my model should not be used in its entirety without first establishing basic information skills with students.

Using Information Skills in the Classroom:

When first presenting students with information skills it is possible to use the *Interactive Model* by putting more structure into it. Working with twenty fifth-graders at Forest Dale Elementary School in Carmel, Indiana, I was able to implement the *Interactive Model*. Working with the library media specialist, I created a research project

to go along with the novel, *The Island of the Blue Dolphins*, which required students to write, show, and tell about a topic of their choice. Within the twenty-four day unit, I incorporated literacy, writing, presentation, technology, critical thinking, and history standards and skills.

Many of these students had no prior experience with independent research, and they had no working knowledge of information skills. To help students, I periodically held individual conferences, team-taught mini lessons with the media specialist, presented students with an instructional packet, and had them keep a daily journal. At the end of the unit students presented projects that included: an island newscast, dioramas, posters, food tasting, cooking classes, and reenactments.

When introducing students to information literacy it is important to continuously watch their frustration level. While a certain amount of frustration will help motivate students and challenge them to complete a task, too much will cause them to shut down. Because all of my students had different backgrounds and experiences with information literacy, their level of productive frustration varied immensely.

When students appear too overwhelmed it is vital to sit with them and help point them into the right direction. This may be as easy as suggesting a new search engine, or helping students secure media equipment. Some students may need more help and may need to change their topic to something more manageable, or change the method in which they share their information with their classmates. Regardless of the grade level using this model, there will be students who are at different developmental stages. This project allows students to personally individualize their project to fit their ability. For example, some of my students were able to create a survival guide, by selecting and synthesizing

information on survival and what it is like to live on Saint Nicolas Island, while other students decided on more easy to find topics such as dolphins. Both groups of students had questions, searched for information to answer their questions, and created a project that reflected what they had learned.

To lessen the frustration level of your students and raise the level of synthesis your students are able to accomplish, it is important to begin with several mini-lessons to introduce them to information literacy and the *Interactive Model*. One of the more basic ideas, that many of my students had trouble understanding, is that not everything published on the Internet is true. Many students naturally assume that every piece of information put in front of them is true. They have never had to be active learners and evaluate what the information they are presented. Students have been programmed to accept what their teacher tells them and what they read. Very rarely do students question conflicting information they receive in school, or is found in a textbook. In order to reprogram students, they need to be made aware that false information and biases exist, and have them practice identifying and evaluating sources. This can easily be added to any lesson or unit. When my students were studying the solar system I provided them with a list of websites I wanted them to explore. Students were asked to evaluate the sites and identify any conflicting information. It is important to expose students to both good and bad sites, so they can recognize the differences. Students also discussed the characteristics of a good website as well as the characteristic of a bad website.

Another way to increase students' critical thinking skills is to have them practice finding information. Many students assume that teachers hold the answers, which they will give to students when the time is right. When a problem is brought up in class,

students need to brainstorm where they could go or to whom they could ask to solve their problem. At this time in education it is also important to encourage students to look beyond traditional textbooks to find the answers to their questions. In today's society, textbooks make up a fraction of information, and often times are outdated. Students should consider community resources, as well as media resources that can be found in the school. Students need to practice finding information and solving problems. Not only will students get the answer to their question, but they will be empowered by the fact that they found the answer through a process approach. This will help students get into the habit of searching for answers on their own, and not waiting for others to give them responses to problems.

Once students are able to identify sources and look at them critically they will be able to take on larger projects that involve information skills. At this time, the role of the teacher also changes drastically. As students are working through the *Interactive Model*, classroom management is extremely important in order to guarantee student success. In this context, management addresses student behavior, but focuses on managing student progress. Through one on one conference, daily or weekly journals, and observations, it is important to watch the progress of all students. Students will not be at the same level, nor will students complete the *Interactive Model* in the same order. This could create an environment of chaos if not properly managed. To prevent a chaotic learning space all students need to be periodically and strategically monitored. Students are to understand what teachers expect of them in the form of a final product, that they have a focused topic and driving questions, that they know where to find information and appropriate sources, that they are recording information, and that they are able to put the information together.

It is important that teachers guide students through these steps, and that do not complete the work for them.

When determining your management style teachers need to keep in mind the environment in which the students will be working. Mini-lessons both in the classroom and with the media specialist will often be conducted in a full class setting as a grand conversation. Depending on the topic, it may also be appropriate to conduct brainstorming in a full class setting. It is important in this setting that all students are participating and are understanding the topic at hand. There may be other situations where students will need to work in small groups. This is a great opportunity to work on cooperative learning skills, and make students aware that they need to respect the opinions and ideas of others. Especially in the upper grades, students will be spending the majority of their time working independently. This will teach student independence, responsibility, and time management skills. Teachers need to act as coaches and cheerleaders during this time. It is important to note that some students will thrive on working independently while other students will struggle. Again, these students need to be guided in their quest for knowledge, but they need to acquire leadership roles, as well.

As the teacher in this project, I enjoyed teaching more in the above formats. Through this project I knew I was arming my students with skills they can use for the rest of their lives. Often times during lessons I wondered how long students would be able to retain the information I had just presented. After completing this project I knew my students would be able to practice the skills they learned through this experience everyday. Because my students took an active role in acquiring knowledge I did not have to worry about participation and whether or not my students were paying attention and

were understanding the information I was presenting. My students worked through their problems and questions to create projects that then served as instructional resources to other students. The student became the teacher, and as the teacher, I served as the coach guiding students through the process.

Student Input:

When the Ohio Educational Library Media Association completed their study on student learning through Ohio school libraries in December of 2003, they determined the degree to which students benefit from school libraries. “This study of thirty-nine effective school libraries across Ohio involved 13,123 students in grades three through twelve, and 879 faculty” (Todd, 2003). The survey highlighted the need for information technologies both in the public library and in the school setting. Participants also stressed the importance of a proactive librarian in helping find sources, evaluate sources, and to create products out of the new information. Ultimately the survey also showed that the students who utilize the library and the media specialist do better in school (Whelan, 2004).

In creating my own survey I had my students look at the benefits of the library in finding information as well as how the information skills project affected how they looked at their own learning abilities. Out of my twenty students, sixteen students completed the survey. Each of these students had spent a month and a half completing research, mini lessons on information literacy, a written project, and a visual to present to the class. Students completed the survey in the media center where our novels group met daily for class. Students were instructed not to put their name on their survey. Those who did put their name on the survey had their survey discarded.

When looking at the results of the survey, students answered overwhelmingly positive to all nine questions. The first group of questions asked students to evaluate their feelings on their project. Students were to look at following statements: I am proud of my project, and I enjoy research projects more when I am allowed to choose my topic. With both statements, ninety-four percent of students answered that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. Furthermore, three-fourths of the class, strongly agreed with the statement that they enjoy research projects more when they are allowed to choose their topic. Throughout the project, as the teacher I saw a motivation that I do not usually see when I assign assignments where strict guidelines on the project are set. My students wanted to do research, not because I told them to, but because they wanted to find answers to questions that they had come up with themselves. This motivation in learning is extremely important, and it helps personalize learning for students.

The next group of questions had students react to statements regarding their feelings on independent problem solving skills. Ninety-four percent of students answered that they agreed or strongly agreed that they now know where to find information to answer questions and solve problems. This is the driving theme of the project. If students know where to find answers, they can seek them out, synthesize information, and create answers and solutions. At the beginning of this project, many of my students had tunnel vision and wanted to put all of their energy into one source, whether it was a book or a website. Almost all of my students learned that they need to use a variety of sources to get complete answers to all of their questions. The second question in this section asked students if they feel more comfortable working independently after completing this project. Eighty-two percent agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while nineteen

percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Looking at the survey as a whole, this question had the greatest number of students disagreeing with the statement. At the fifth grade level, this project was the first time my students had the opportunity to work independently in a problem solving environment. They will need multiple opportunities to really get their confidence up to a level where they feel completely comfortable working independently. It is also important to note, that while working in class, my students did not work completely independently. They were urged to share ideas with students who had similar topics as themselves, and they had myself as well as the media specialist answer any questions. In the elementary setting, it is not the goal, nor should it be the goal of the information skills model to have students working completely independently. While they should come up with original ideas and projects, they also need to work in an open environment where peer-assistance and idea swapping are encouraged and respected.

The third grouping of questions asked students to look at statements regarding how their project made them feel about how they learned. All but one of my students agreed or strongly agreed that they learned more from their project than from their comprehension questions, vocabulary, and classroom discussion. This is not to say that these traditional methods of completing a novel are not necessary. When teaching my unit on the *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, I knew my students had to walk away from this book with new vocabulary knowledge, as well as being able to find literary elements in the reading. However, all of these activities require students to be passive learners. Their final project forced them to take control of their learning experience, which they found more valuable. Students can ignore a teacher when they are talking, but they can not

ignore themselves when they are trying to solve a problem or answer a question that they have presented themselves. This conclusion was cemented when again all but one of my students agreed or strongly agreed that they learn better if they find information on their own, rather than from a textbook or lecture from a teacher.

The final group of questions in my class survey asked students to reflect on how well they conveyed what they learned to each other and to their teacher. Overall, my students were less confident in their ability to teach others as they were in learning from others. Ninety-four percent of my students felt this project allowed them to learn from their classmates, while eighty-eight percent of students felt they were able to teach their classmates and show their teacher their strengths as a student. Because this was the first time my students had completed a project such as this, they were extremely proud of their projects, but they were less confident in how others would perceive their project. This seemed to be particularly evident after two students presented an elaborated project that involved costumes, sets, fish tasting, and props. I am extremely curious about how students would approach a project such as this if they were given another chance at it. I am confident that the presentation of their projects as well as their ability to convey their new ideas to their classmates would improve.

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APPENDIX

Interactive Model

Island of the Blue Dolphin Unit

Project Overview

Web Portal

Research Packet

Student Survey

Survey Results Graph

Examples of Student Work

INTERACTIVE MODEL

1. **Appreciation:** Spark student's curiosity. This could stem from anything; an enrichment activity, the beginning of a unit, the end of a unit, the middle of a unit, outside interest, etc. (Modeled after Pathways)
2. **Directing:** Formally establish objective(s) and question(s). Very important for student to ask a good question to direct them to their final product.
3. **Planning:** Students work as a class, group, or individual to figure out what they already know, brainstorm additional ideas, identify appropriate sources to use (what is available to them, what is not that they would like to have available). Plan a course of action.
4. **Exploration:** Student takes information skills learned and explores through inquiry learning. Students should use multiple sources (textbook, Web, audio/visuals, interactive media, community, teacher, and hands on activities). Teacher is mostly passive in this stage offering guidance and redirection where needed.
5. **Acknowledgement:** Student will keep a daily journal, which includes Works Cited for all sources explored. Students are evaluating each source; was it a good source? Does the information apply to my question? How will I use the information? Did this source contradict information from a different source? Did I find bias? Students are constantly documenting their work and evaluating it. Hold teacher and student accountable.
6. **Tie Together:** Students pull together their information to fully answer their question.
7. **Share:** Students determine the best way to present and teach others (by teaching other students they will reinforce the information they have just learned themselves). This step could change dramatically depending on the project. Students have an opportunity to discuss and share new ideas.
8. **Backtrack:** Students evaluate their work. Did you follow through with the objective? What would you do differently? How well did I communicate information with others?

Island of the Blue Dolphins Unit

Miss Leistensnider

Standards:

Word Recognition

5.1.1 Read aloud grade-level-appropriate narrative text (stories) and expository text (information) fluently and accurately and with appropriate timing, changes in voice, and expression.

5.1.5 Understand and explain the figurative use of words in similes (comparisons that use like or as: The stars were like a million diamonds in the sky.) and metaphors (implied comparisons: The stars were brilliant diamonds in the night sky.)

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

5.2.3 Recognize and understand main ideas presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.

5.2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

5.3.2 Identify the main problem or conflict of the plot and explain how it is resolved.

5.3.3 Use the knowledge of the character's actions, thoughts, motives, and appearance to define his character and relate the contrast to the theme/plot.

5.3.4 Understand that theme refers to the central idea or meaning of a selection and recognize themes, whether they are implied or stated directly.

5.3.5 Describe the function and effect of common literary devices, such as imagery, metaphor, and symbolism.

- Symbolism: the use of an object to represent something else; for example, a dove might symbolize peace.
- Imagery: the use of language to create vivid pictures in the reader's mind.
- Metaphor: an implied comparison in which a word or phrase is used in place of another, such as, He was drowning in money.

Writing Applications

5.5.3 Write research reports about important ideas, issues, or events by using the following guidelines (Quest!):

- Frame questions that direct the investigation.
- Establish a main idea or topic.
- Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.
- Use a variety of information sources, including firsthand interviews, reference materials, and electronic resources, to locate information for the report.

Information Literacy

- 5.8.1 Choose appropriate print, media, and electronic materials to find information.
- 5.8.2 Use navigational tools such as electronic card catalog, Internet browsers, and hypermedia.
- 5.8.7 Find information by using a variety of resources libraries, community resources, local experts, and interviews.
- 5.8.8 Check for information from at least two sources.
- 5.8.9 Evaluate search strategy and adopt useful parts
- 5.9.10 Correctly cite source(s) of information.

Listening and Speaking

Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication

- 5.7.4 Select a focus, organizational structure, point of view, and ideas supported by evidence for an oral presentation.
- 5.7.5 Use volume, phrasing, timing, and gestures appropriately to enhance meaning and engage the audience

Calendar:

Day 1 (Wednesday, October 6, 2004): Introduce the basic themes of the novel (5.3.4).

Read the author's note aloud. Talk about *Island of the Blue Dolphins* being based on a true story.

Have students try to identify the components of *courage*. You might start them off by listing "resolve" and "inner strength." Ask students to help define these terms and to name other aspects of courage. Then challenge them to find examples to share with the class. They might find poems or short stories in which characters show inner strength, newspaper articles that describe people who have shown resolve, and so on. As students read, they can think about how Karana shows courage.

Ask students to imagine themselves in this situation: "You are stranded alone on an island that is surrounded by salt water. There are animals on the island, but you have no weapons to hunt them or tools to fish. You have only the clothes on your back." In small groups, have students plan a survival strategy. What will they do for food? clothing? shelter? fresh water? How can they work together to ensure their survival on the island? Be sure to give students time to present their plans to other groups. During their presentations, help groups clarify their plans by asking probing questions, such as "How will you sharpen the rock to make the point on your spear?" "How will you store extra water in case you can't get back to the spring?" "How will you protect the food you store from hungry wild animals?" As they read *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, they can compare their ideas to Karana's actions.

Day 2 (Thursday, October 7, 2004)

Pass out books to students. Break students up into group A1, A2, B1 and B2. Explain to them that on different days they will be completing different activities. On Mondays and Wednesdays, group A will be working on their Tic-Tac-Toe assignment and their research project. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, group A will be working with me on reading, vocabulary, and comprehension questions. Group B's schedule will be flipped from group A's.

Pass out Tic-Tac-Toe assignment, TTT rubric, and research project directions. Go over TTT and the rubric. Have students hold on to their rubric because they will be evaluating themselves before they turn in their TTT assignment. After going over the research project, have students work on creating a rubric for the project. Have students look at the Information Skills Model attached to their direction sheet. Walk them through each step, giving examples of how the model will be used with their research project. Tell students they will need to keep a journal of their daily progress, research, ideas, questions, and bibliography.

Have groups A1 and B1 complete the first half of vocabulary words, and groups A2 and B2 complete the second half.

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 1-3 (5.1.5) (5.3.5).

Day 3 (Monday, October 11, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: (5.1.1) As will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

Bs will work on TTT and research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 4-6 (5.2.4).

Day 4 (Tuesday, October 12, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: Bs will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

As will work on TTT and research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 7-8.

Day 5 (Wednesday, October 13, 2004)

Working in their A and B groups, students will come up with activities and games to review vocabulary (students may create puzzles or use Vocabulary Maps) and orally answer discussion questions.

Assign: Study for comprehension and vocabulary quiz over chapters 1-8.

Day 6 (Thursday, October 14, 2004)

10-10:20: Take and grade comprehension and vocabulary quizzes.

10:20-10:40: As will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

Bs will work on TTT and research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 9-10

Day 7 (Monday, October 18, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: Bs will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

As will work on TTT and research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 11-13

Day 8 (Monday, October 25, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: As will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

Bs will conference with teacher about research paper.

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapter 14-16

Day 9 (Tuesday, October 26, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: Bs will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

As will conference with teacher about research paper.

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 17-19

Day 10 (Wednesday, October 27, 2004)

Working in their A and B groups, students will come up with activities and games to review vocabulary and orally answer discussion questions.

Assign: Study for comprehension and vocabulary quiz over chapters 9-19

Day 11 (Thursday, October 28, 2004)

10-10:20: Take and grade comprehension and vocabulary quizzes.

10:20-10:40: As will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

Bs will work on TTT and research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 20-21

Day 12 (Monday, November 1, 2004)

Tic Tac Toe due today

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: Bs will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

As will work on research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapters 22-24

Day 13 (Tuesday, November 2, 2004)

In the media center with Amy working on research project (mini lesson on sources and narrowing your search).

Day 14 (Wednesday, November 3, 2004)

In the computer lab with Amie working on research project (mini lesson on using the Internet for research).

Day 15 (Thursday, November 4, 2004)

In the computer lab with Amie working on research project (mini lesson on web portal).

Day 16 (Monday, November 8, 2004)

In the computer lab with Amie working on research project.

Day 18 (Tuesday, November 9, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: As will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

Bs will work on research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapter 25-27

Day 19 (Thursday, November 11, 2004)

10-10:20: Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect. Split class into group A and group B, in these groups 1s will teach 2s their vocabulary words and vice versa.

10:20-10:40: Bs will read aloud in small groups, while I listen in.

As will work on research project

Assign: Reading, vocabulary, comprehension questions for chapter 27-29

Day 20 (Monday, November 15, 2004)

Grade comprehension questions as a large group, collect.

Working in their A and B groups, students will come up with activities and games to review vocabulary and orally answer discussion questions.

Day 21 (Tuesday/Wednesday, November 16/17, 2004)

Have students write their own ending to the novel.

Day 22 (Thursday, November 18, 2004)

Work day

Day 23 and 24

Self-evaluations, peer evaluations, and present projects.

Hand in journals.

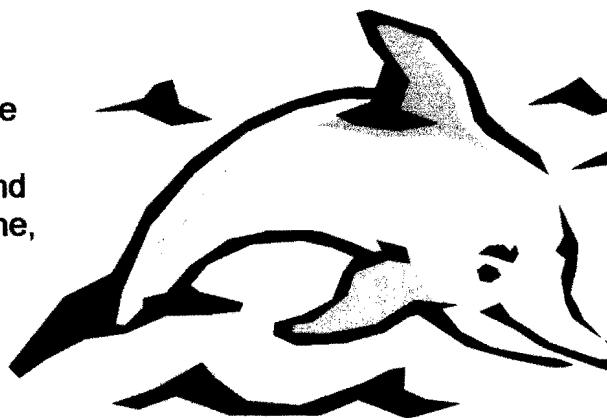
ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

REASEARCH PROJECT "WRITE, SHOW, TELL"

Based on real events, this is the story of Karana, a young Indian girl who lives on the Island of the Blue Dolphins, which is actually San Nicolas. She and her brother are left marooned on this island when all the villagers leave to live on another island. Time passes as Karana struggles to survive on her own. As part of this novel unit, you will be asked to complete a research project relating to the fictional story of the Island of the Blue Dolphins or the real story of the Lost Woman on San Nicolas. Your project must have a written, visual, and oral component to it. Research proposals are due to Miss Leistensnider no later than October 17, 2004, outlining all three components of your project.

Possible ideas:

- Food
- Compare San Nicolas to the Island of the Blue Dolphins
- Different types of geography on the island (canyon, cliffs, cove, harbor, mesa, ravine, spring, etc.)
- Survival
- Marine life
- Navigation
- Culture of the people on the island



Use your imagination and be creative. Have fun with this project!

Island of the Blue Dolphins Research:

KNOW IT ALL

What do I want to know?

Stick to your questions, but you may always generate new questions as needed - especially if you find you cannot locate enough information. Research is a PROCESS. Things will constantly change as you find new information.

How and where do I find it?

Generate questions and keywords for searching.

Use all types of sources - print and non-print.

Remember to use Table of Contents, Index, etc.

Always use Tarzan Talk - never copy word for word.

Remember to write down your sources for a bibliography.

Use the following search tips to help you with online searching.

What will I do with it?

Write a full report with a bibliography

How did I do?

Check your rubric and packet as you go to make sure you are doing what you need to do.

Search Tips:

If your search comes up with thousands of web sites (called "hits") then you need to narrow your search.

1. Try using quotation marks around your search so that the search engine makes sure to find the search phrase mentioned together. Example: "marine life". If you do not use quotation marks, the search will return all web-pages that use either word(s).
2. Try using the word AND to limit your search. Example: "marine life" AND "San Nicolas."

If you are getting very few returns on your search, you need to try a different search strategy.

3. Try using synonyms or a more general term for your topic. Ex: food = prey

The following websites are good resources for your project:

Forest Dale Media Center:

Click on Reference Links> Encyclopedias

OR Search the Web

OR Library Catalog (write down call number for book)

More Websites:

Chumash People:

<http://www.sbnature.org/research/anthro/chumash/intro.htm>

Survival Links From ThinkQuest:

http://www.thinkquest.org/library/site_sum.html?lib_id=957&team_id=2041

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http://www.thinkquest.org/library/site_sum.html?lib_id=4958&team_id=J01

11725

http://www.thinkquest.org/library/site_sum.html?lib_id=4607&team_id=J01

10060

Cultures Around the World

http://www.thinkquest.org/library/site_sum.html?lib_id=4959&team_id=J01

11929

Foods from Hawaiian Islands

http://www.thinkquest.org/library/site_sum.html?lib_id=4728&team_id=J01

10445

Channel Islands

http://www.thinkquest.org/library/site_sum.html?lib_id=6842&team_id=TQ

0312735

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

<http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov/>

Island of Blue Dolphins Webquest (includes info on survival, food, and animals of San Nicolas)

http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/score_lessons/dolphin/home2.shtml

San Diego Zoo

URL: <http://www.sandiegozoo.org/>

Sea World

URL: <http://www.seaworld.org/>

Created 11/04 by Amie Paradise, Media Specialist.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS
REASEARCH PROJECT "WRITE, SHOW, TELL"
Due November 22, 2004

Name:

Topic:

WHAT DO I ALREADY KNOW?

1. What I have learned about my topic in school?

2. What I have learned about my topic outside of school?

3. What I have learned about my topic in the Island of *The Blue Dolphins*?

WHAT DO I WANT TO LEARN?

Write at least five good questions (these need to be check by Miss Leistensnider) about what you want to learn about your topic.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Brainstorm keywords about your topic in the space below.

WHERE WILL I FIND INFORMATION ON MY TOPIC?

Circle any source that you think you would like to use to find information on your topic. Write any ideas you have to use the source. Remember you need to use at least two different sources on this project.

Internet

Books

Video or TV program

Interview Someone

Computer Program

Family trip or Field Trip

EVALUATE YOUR SOURCES

THINK

1. Is the resource at the right level for you and can you understand it?
2. Is the information up to date?
3. What can you find out about the author?
4. Are there pictures, maps, diagrams etc?
5. Will the information in this resource answer YOUR QUESTIONS?

AIM TO EVALUATE AT LEAST FIVE RESOURCES:

Type of Source:

Author:

Title:

Date of Publication:

Scan the Table of Contents and the Index (use your keywords) and make a note of any useful pages:

Do you think this source will be useful? WHY?

What did you learn from this source? (You may want to use index cards to record your information and page numbers)

Type of Source:

Author:

Title:

Date of Publication:

Scan the Table of Contents and the Index (use your keywords) and make a note of any useful pages:

Do you think this source will be useful? WHY?

What did you learn from this source? (You may want to use index cards to record your information and page numbers)

Type of Source:

Author:

Title:

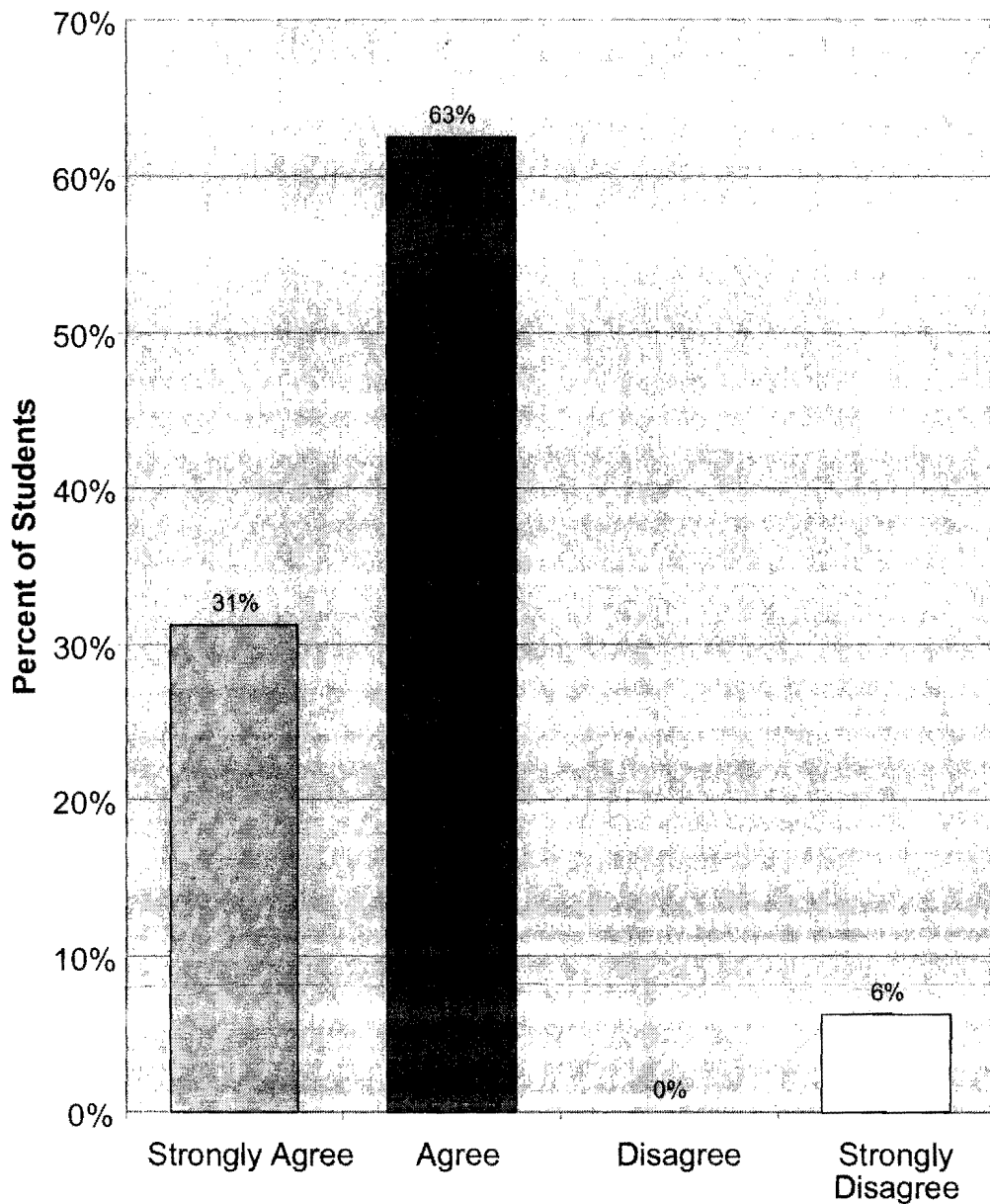
Date of Publication:

Scan the Table of Contents and the Index (use your keywords) and make a note of any useful pages:

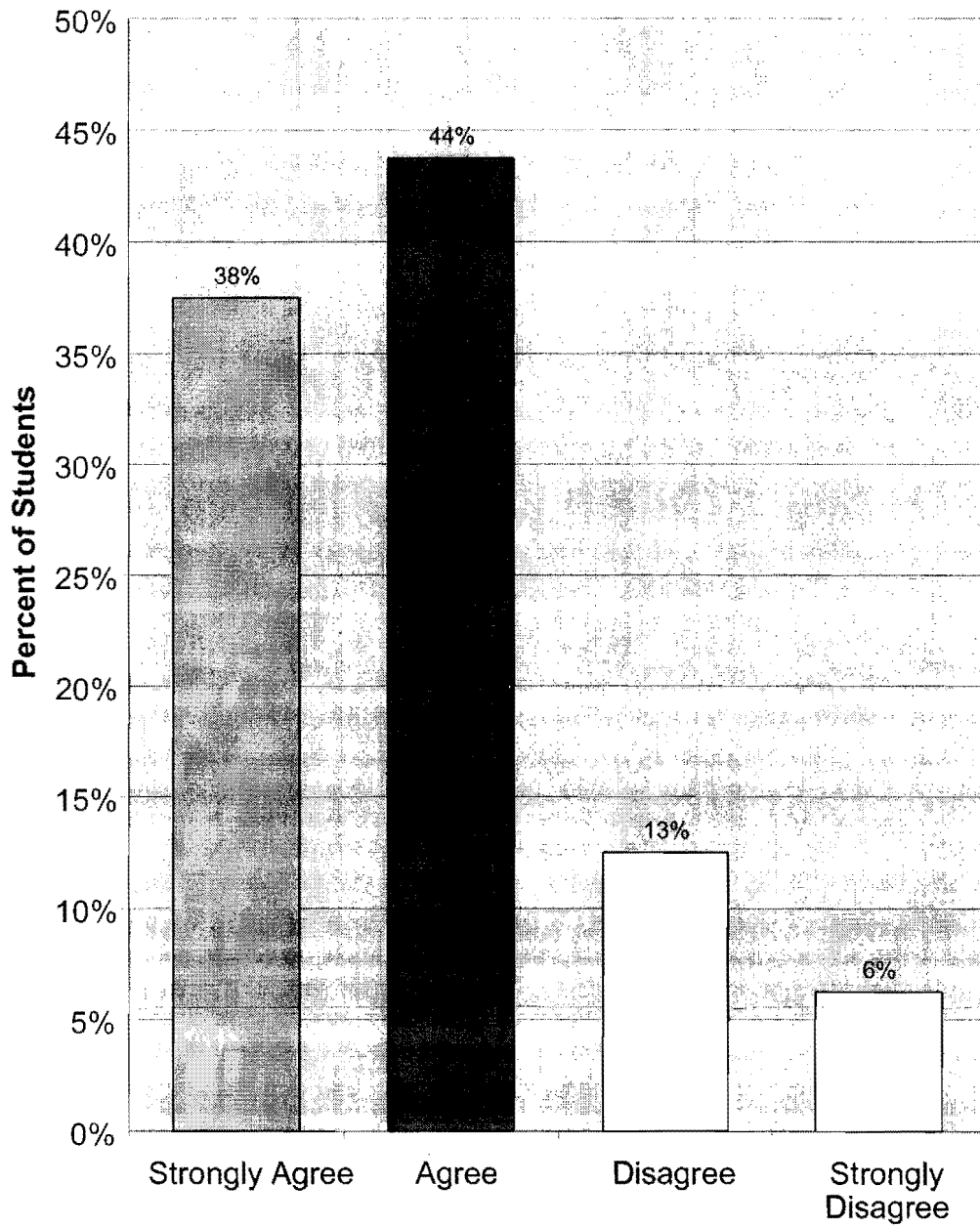
Do you think this source will be useful? WHY?

What did you learn from this source? (You may want to use index cards to record your information and page numbers)

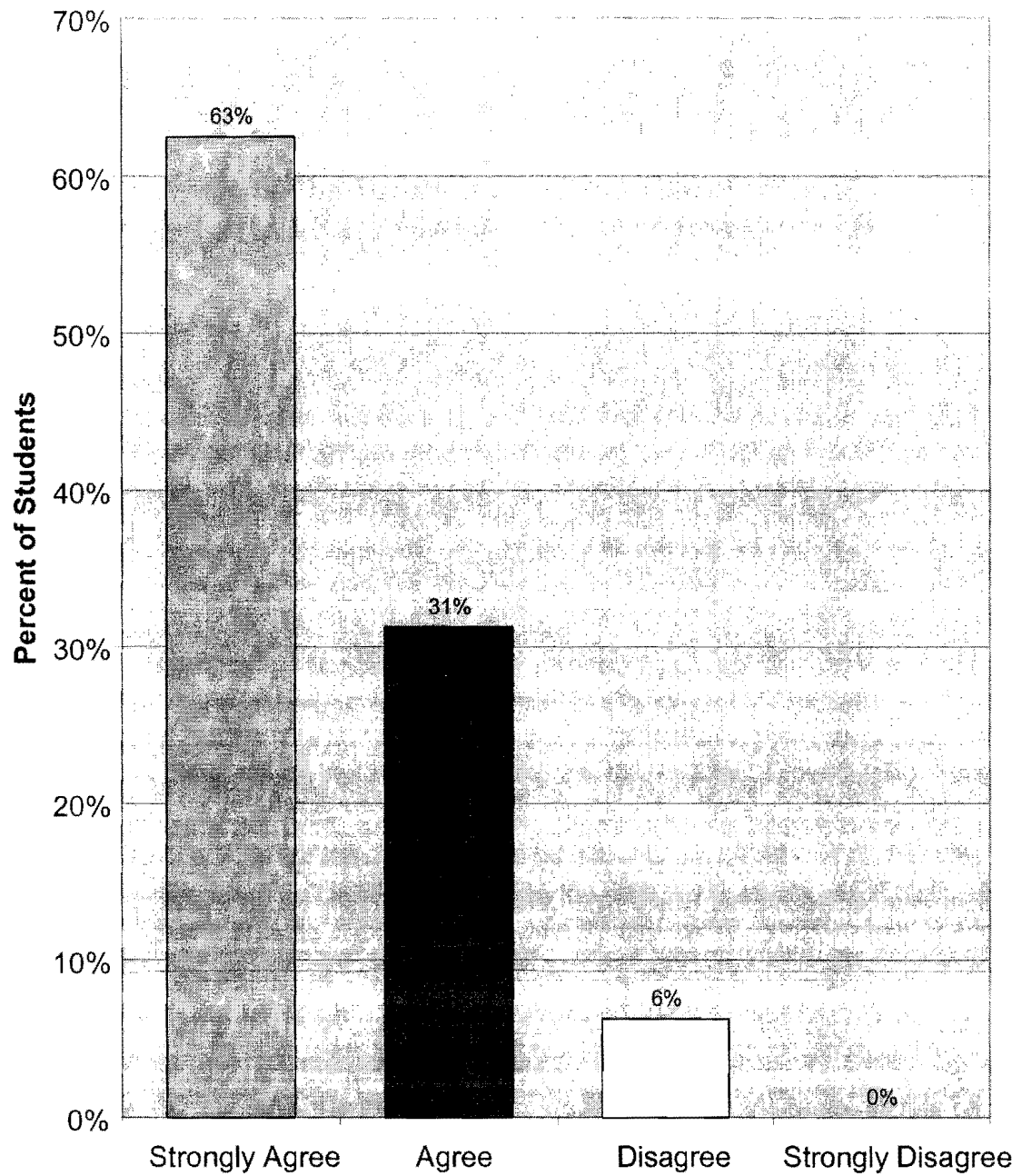
I learned more from my project than from my comprehension questions, vocabulary, and classroom discussion.



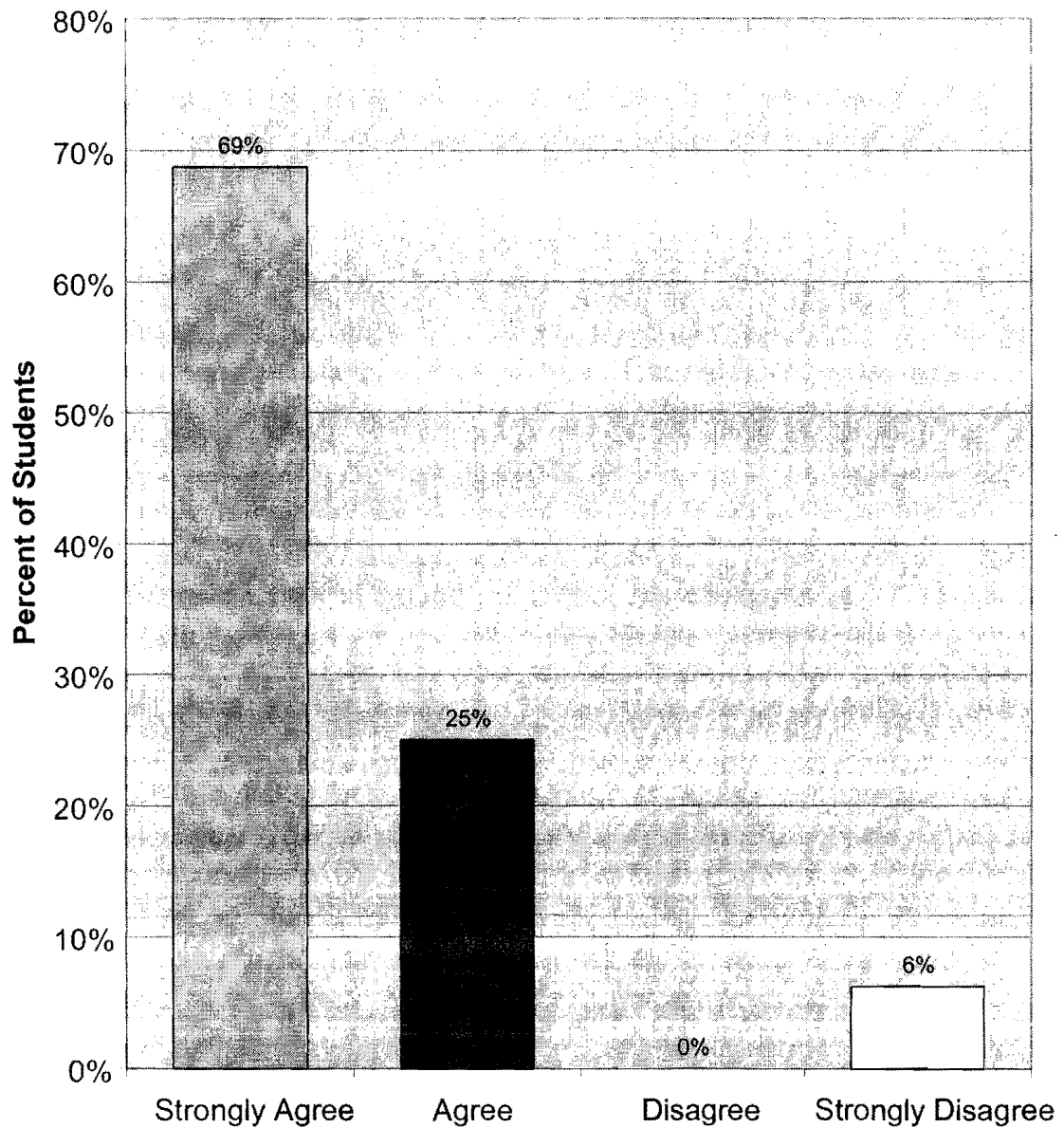
I now feel more comfortable working independently.



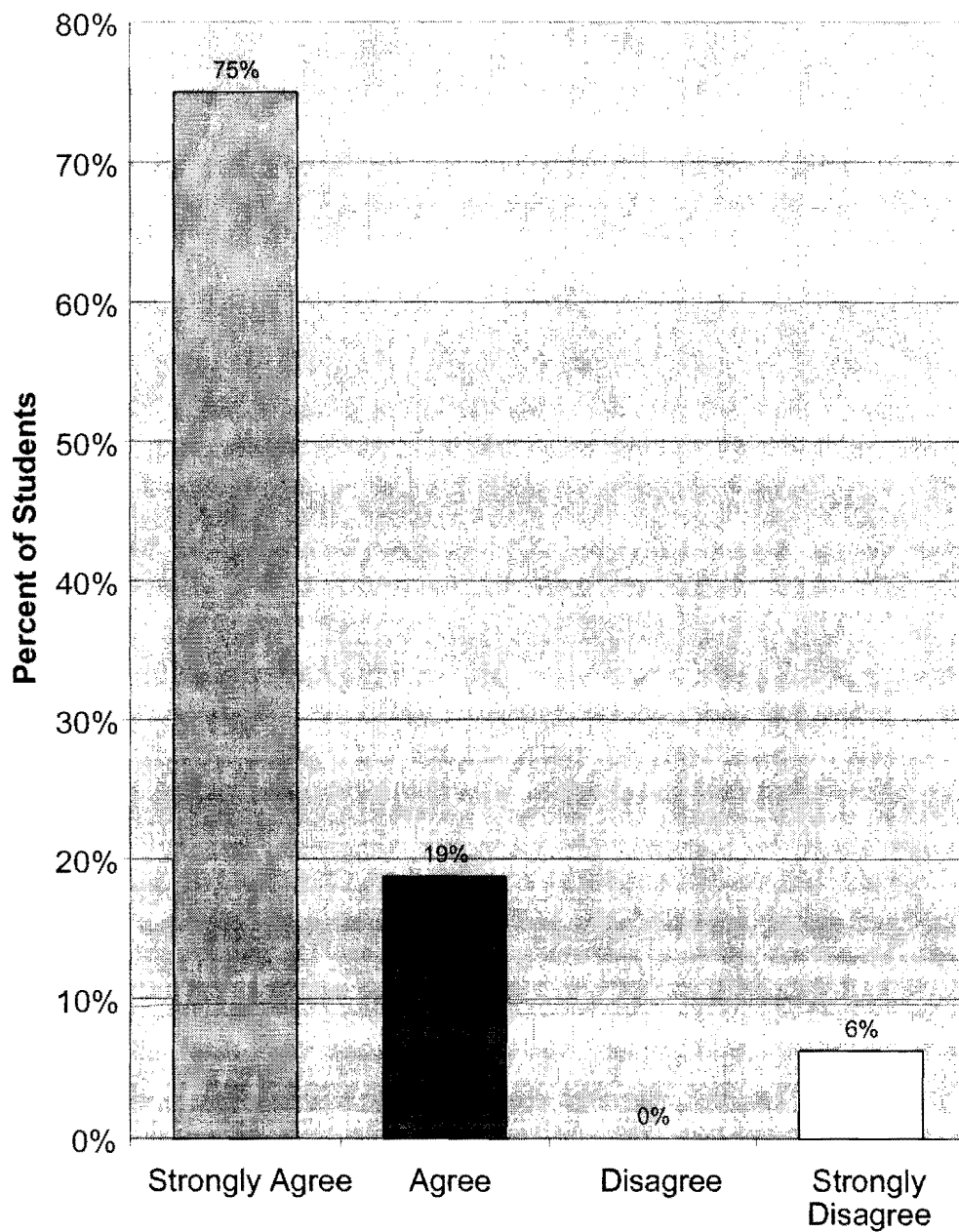
I am proud of my project.



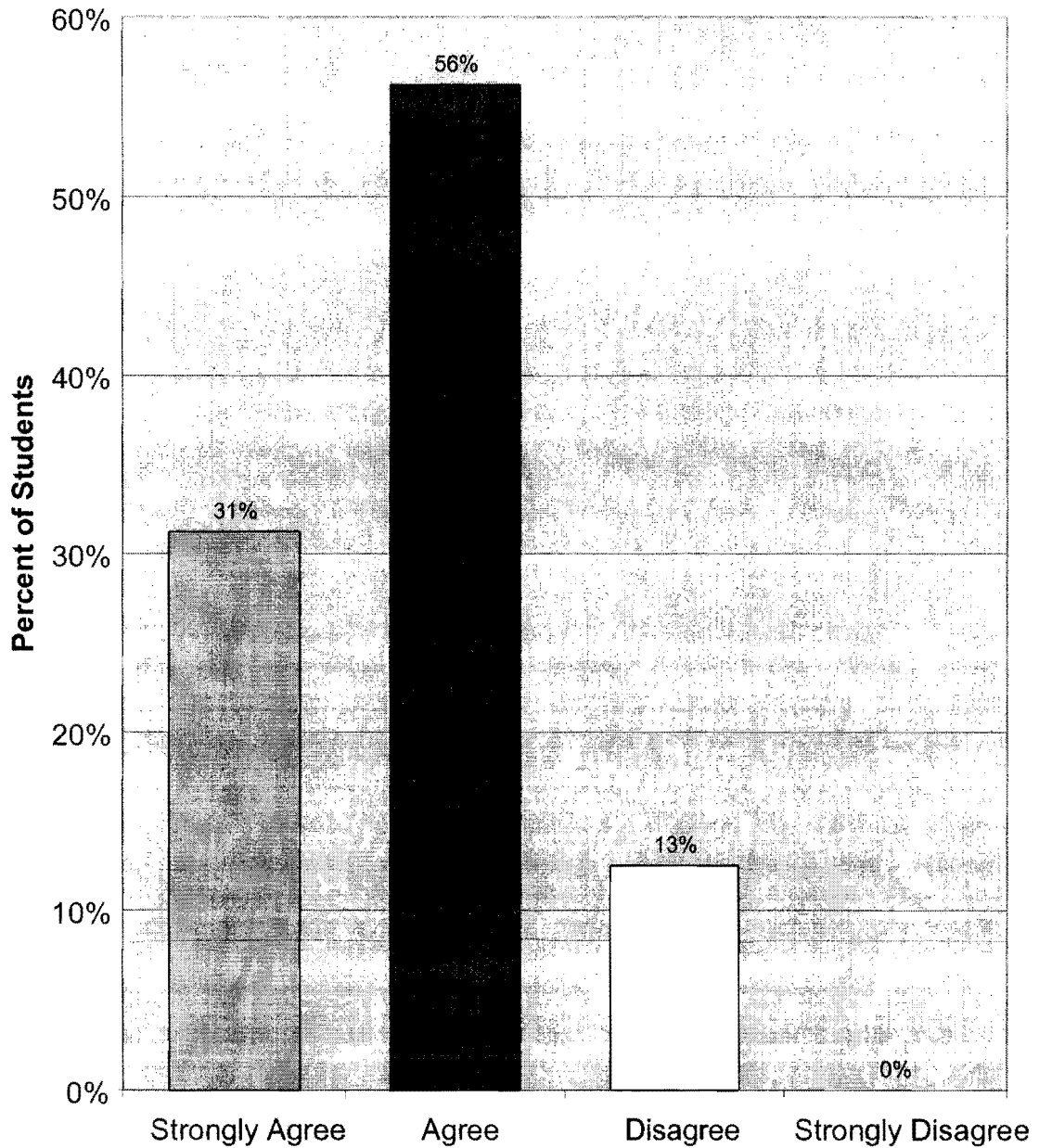
**I learn better if I find information my own,
rather than from a textbook or lecture from a
teacher.**



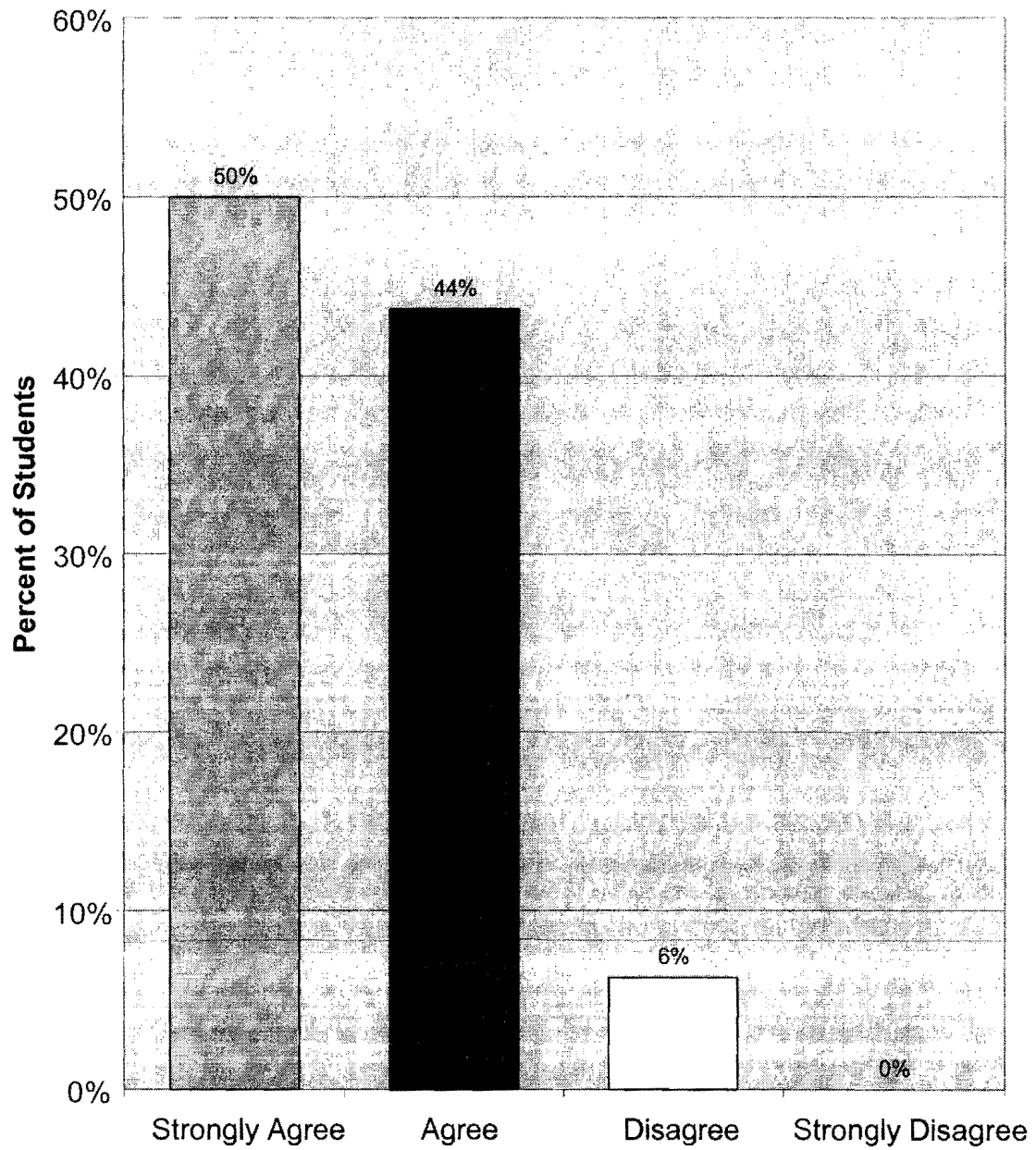
**I enjoy research projects more when I am
allowed to choose my topic.**



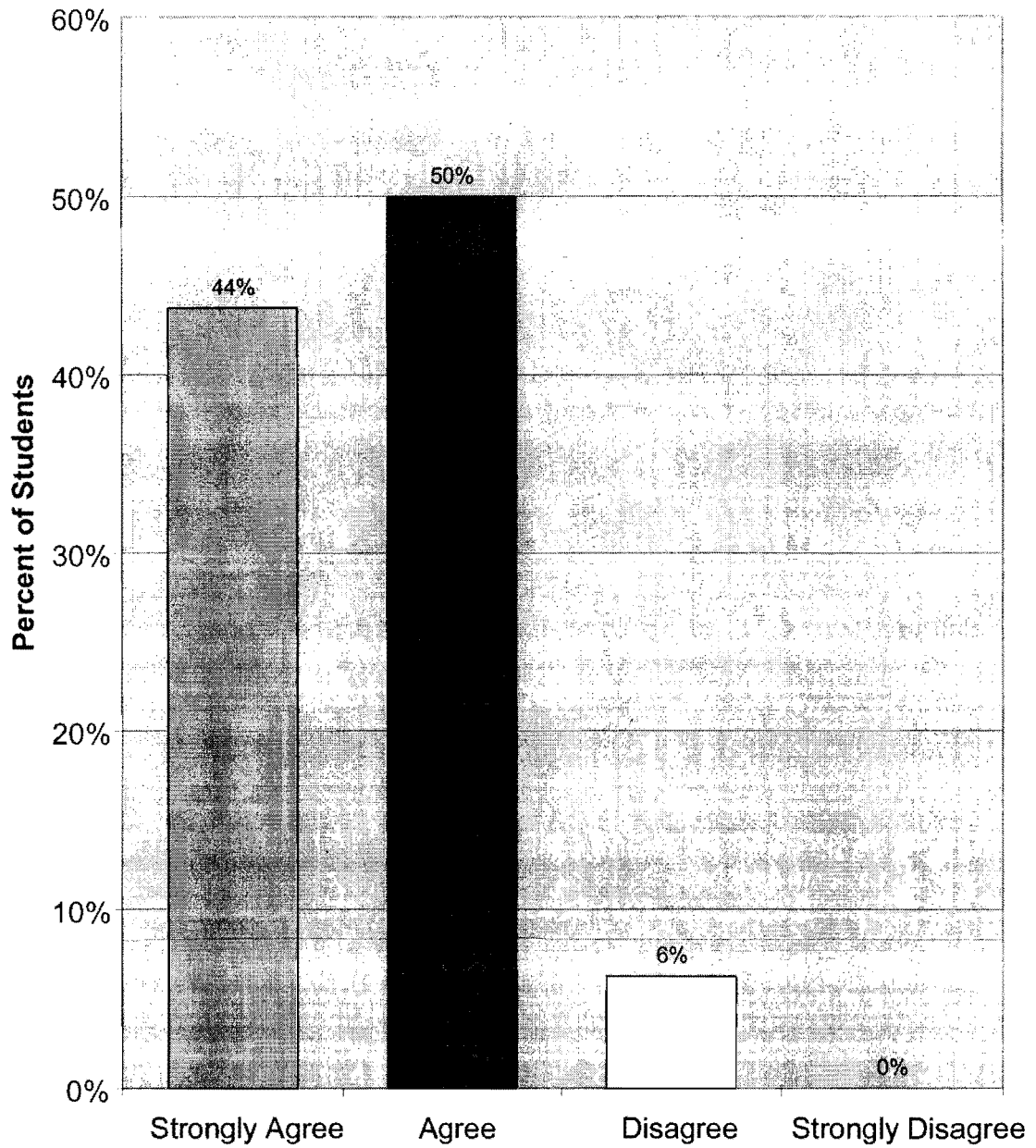
This project allowed me to teach my classmates things they didn't know.



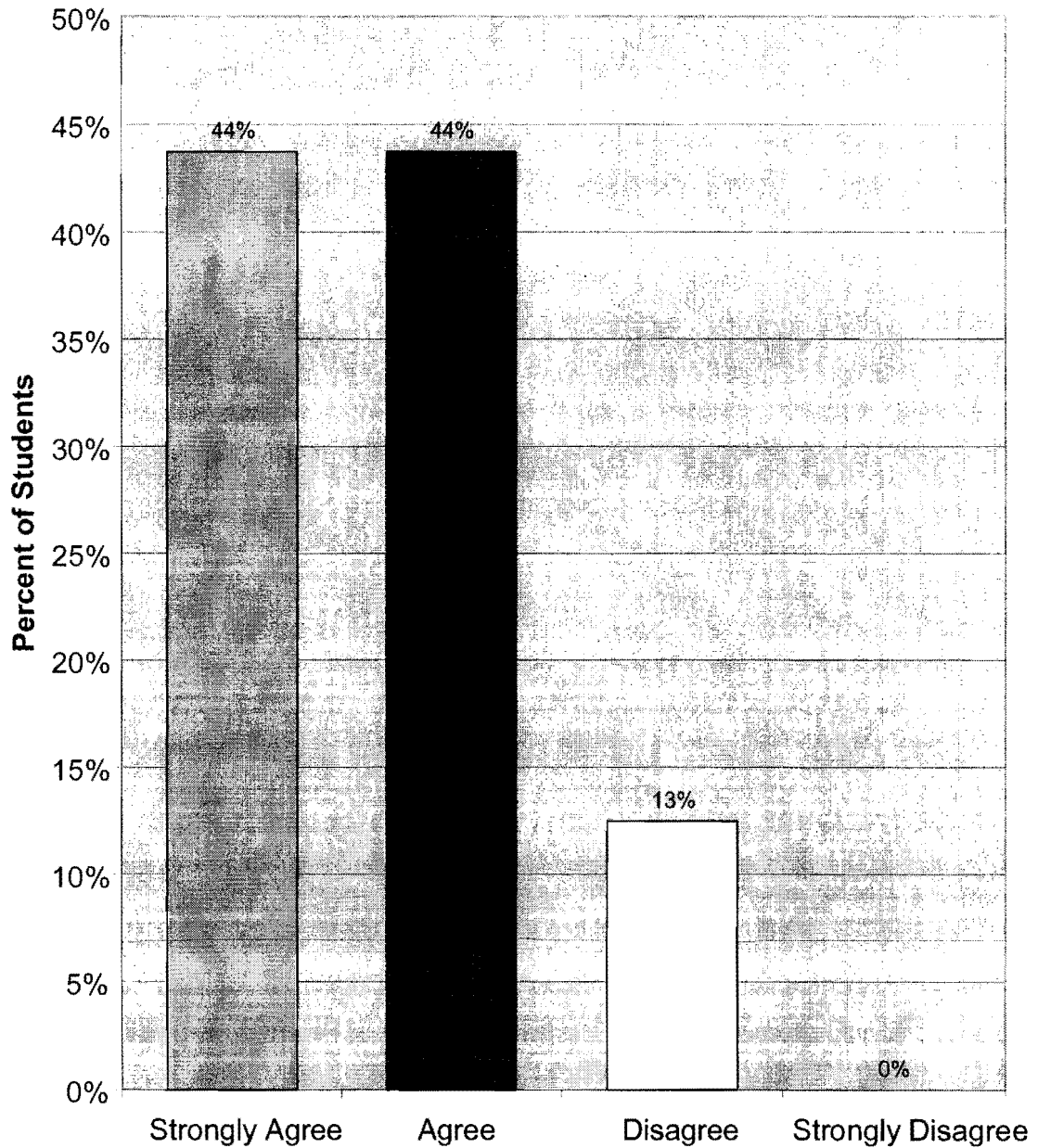
This project allowed me to learn from my classmates.



I know where to find information to answer questions and solve problems.



**This project allowed me to show my teacher
my strengths as a student.**



Examples of Student Work

